



**MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION
7506 E. INDIAN SCHOOL ROAD
COMMUNITY DESIGN STUDIO - NAVE
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2007**

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Art DeCabooter, Chair
Erik Filsinger, Vice-chair
Joan Fudala, Commissioner
Virginia Korte, Commissioner
Gerry Miller, Commissioner
Arnold Roy, Commissioner
Tom Silverman, Commissioner
Linda Whitehead, Commissioner
Solange Whitehead, Commissioner (arrived at 5:12 p.m.)

ABSENT: Melinda Gulick, Commissioner
Rand Hubbell, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Cafarella, Director
Lisa Gurtler, Financial Services
Don Meserve, Preservation Planner
Claire Miller, McDowell Sonoran Preserve Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Ruthie Carll, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy, Managing Director
Carla, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy, Executive Director
Dan Gruber
Ginia Wickershauer

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairman DeCabooter called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

Roll call and introductions indicated members and guests present as stated above.

2. **Approval of December 7, 2006, and January 4, 2007, Joint Commission Meeting Minutes**

COMMISSIONER FUDALA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 7, 2006 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION MEETING. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KORTE, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF NINE (9) TO ZERO (0).

VICE-CHAIR FILSINGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 4, 2007 JOINT COMMISSION MEETING. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FUDALA, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF NINE (9) TO ZERO (0).

3. **January 23 City Council Study Session on the Proposed Desert Discovery Center and Possible Appointment of DDC Task Force Members**

Chair DeCabooter invited commentary. Commissioner Silverman reported that the study session with City Council went well. Private money is being acquired to fund the proposed market study. Mr. Cafarella said the next step was to form the Task Force and have it start creating the General Scope of Work. Once the scope of work and an approach to funding have been completed, the market study proposal would be presented to City Council for approval.

In response to Commissioner Miller's inquiry, Mr. Cafarella said the Task Force would obtain input from the MSPC, the Desert Discovery Committee, the Tourism Development Commission and any interested citizens when formulating the General Scope of Work. It would then seek approval from the MSPC and the TDC before approaching the City Council.

4. **McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Strategic Plan**

Ms. Ruthie Carll, Managing Director, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy, presented an overview of the Strategic Plan for the future of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy (MSC). There are 18 planned activities for the remainder of FY 2006-2007.

Seventy new stewards are to graduate from the most recent training program. The entire volunteer program is being revamped. Once it is re-launched in the fall, it will recruit only trail crews, pathfinders and patrollers. Specific targets have been set to determine the number of volunteers needed to fulfill the City's required level of service. An audit of the FY 2005-2006 showed that 12,000 hours of volunteer work would be required. Mr. Gruber added that the current number of 200 volunteers would need to be increased to 400, and all stewards would be required to work more volunteer hours in order to reach the service level goal.

Commissioner Linda Whitehead inquired about the pathfinders. Ms. Carll explained that pathfinder positions are intended for people who are unable to physically perform in the other two roles. They are tasked with helping maintain trailheads and providing information to users.

There are two major events planned for February, the Founder's Day at DC Ranch and the Steward's Retreat. The MSC Board will hold a Leadership Development Event to recruit more board and committee members. A new Friends Campaign will attempt to increase membership from among the Preserve's neighbors. New issues of *Mountain Lines* and the *VIP News* will be

distributed. The MSC Board also plans a retreat, and a fundraising dinner will be held at Troon Club House to benefit the volunteer program.

Commissioner Linda Whitehead inquired when the Strategic Plan would be finished. Ms. Carll responded that it is expected to be finalized in April. The next three years will be detailed, while estimates would be provided for years four and five.

5. **Update/Discussion on State Land Reform Approach**

Carla said one of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy's primary missions is advocacy. State Land reform is needed in order to complete the Preserve. The failure of Prop 106 left many issues in flux. Discussions are being held statewide to determine whether to pursue another initiative and if so, determine its content.

The Heritage Fund will be on the ballot again since it is terming out. An initiative concerning the San Pedro River and water issues is also being proposed.

In response to Commissioner Miller's inquiry, Carla said that the voter-approved Arizona Preserve Initiative (API) is funded but cannot legally disburse the money until conservation is made an accepted value in the constitution. That would require a vote of the people and an enabling act change.

6. **Planning Committee Organization, Work Approach and Plan**

Vice-Chair and Planning Committee Chair Filsinger summarized the January 16 meeting and presented the proposed Committee roster for the upcoming year. A set of working groups has been established. These working groups would formulate ideas to best address pertinent topics, and then present them back to the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee would then decide whether to recommend action to the Preserve Commission. Mr. Cafarella noted that the names on the Committee roster will need to be submitted to City Council.

7. **Preserve Director's Report: Updates**

Mr. Cafarella reported that one of the three large outstanding condemnation issues was resolved last week through mediation. The subject properties total 160 acres. Additionally, the owner of 70-acres of land recently made a proposal for settlement. Both of the cases are in the vicinity of the planned northern access area that is adjacent to the north face of the McDowell Mountains.

The architect of the public Gateway improvement project has designed a temporary 50-space parking area on the east side of Thompson Peak Parkway to open up trails in the Gateway area. The temporary parking area was very carefully designed to only disturb land that would be disturbed by the future access area construction. In response to Commissioner Miller's inquiry, Mr. Cafarella said that all of the temporary trails connecting to this temporary parking area would traverse land that is already disturbed.

The Promotion Committee and the Fire Department will do a joint promotion in the spring to address noxious plants both in the Preserve and adjacent subdivisions. The goal is to elevate public awareness of problems and attempt to modify behavior patterns.

The website will be updated, allowing the downloading of trail maps to be simplified.

8. **Preserve Manager's Report: Updates**

Ms. Miller reported that most of the initial problems in the Lost Dog Wash restrooms have been resolved. Pathfinders provide valuable information to Preserve users on the status of the trailheads. The Lost Dog Wash and Sunrise Trail maps are being combined into one southern area trail map.

In collaboration with public safety entities staff will create a search and rescue map. Commissioner Miller inquired how many emergency markers are currently in place on constructed trails. Ms. Miller said 40 percent have been placed so far.

9. **Future Executive Session for McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission**

MOTION TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON MARCH 1, 2007, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC BODY AND CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY FOR LEGAL ADVICE TO CONSIDER ITS POSITION AND INSTRUCT ITS REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING NEGOTIATING FOR PURCHASE OR LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY FOR INCLUSION IN THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE. ARS 38-431.03 (A) (3) AND (A) (7).

COMMISSIONER LINDA WHITEHEAD MOVED FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE MARCH 1, 2007 MEETING. SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR FILSINGER, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF NINE (9) TO ZERO (0).

10. **Commissioner Comments and Public Comments**

Chair DeCabooter invited public commentary. Ms. Ginia Wickershauer opined that the addition of knowledgeable experts, similar to those found in County parks, would add much to the Preserve experience. She said the County parks have got it right.

11. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

Commissioner Miller called for an invasive weed management plan to be addressed by the Commission.

12. **Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, and no need for an executive session, the meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
A/V Tronics, Inc.